



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

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STATE REDUCES COUNTY'S FREE FLU VACCINE *Plenty of Vaccine Available for Public in Coming Flu Season*

Due to the state budget crisis, there will be less free flu vaccine available for low-income adults in the region than in previous years.

However, the San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency (HHSA) anticipates there will be plenty of influenza vaccine for all persons who want it. This flu season, which starts in late August, San Diego County will have 36,690 doses of free vaccine coming from the California Department of Public Health, compared to 65,500 last year.

"The decrease in free vaccine is the result of the fragile state budget," said Nick Macchione, Director of HHSA, which is spearheading the County's Live Well, San Diego!, a 10-year campaign to improve the health and well being of area residents. "But we expect there will be no shortage of vaccine. We anticipate there will be an adequate supply of flu vaccine this season."

The free doses are a small fraction of the total supply of vaccine coming the County's seven public health centers and medical offices, which will have plenty of flu vaccine overall.

The free vaccine will be available at the seven County clinics and shared with some community organizations that serve people age 60 and older, and other adults, who are low income, uninsured, or who face barriers to obtaining routine health care services.

"It's important that everyone 6 months and older get vaccinated against the flu," said Eric McDonald, M.D., M.P.H., County Deputy Public Health Officer. "Influenza can have serious side effects and lead to medical complications and hospitalizations, especially in the elderly and in very young children."

For more information, call the HHSA Immunization Branch at (866) 358-2966, or visit www.sdiz.org.

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